



NEWS

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Megaports Program Expanding to Belgium

*Radiation Detection Equipment Installed Under NNSA Nonproliferation Program
Will Help To Detect Smuggled Nuclear Material*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and the government of Belgium today held a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the first phase of installation of radiation detection equipment at Belgium's Port of Antwerp – one of Europe's largest seaports. Under NNSA's Megaports Initiative, specialized radiation detection equipment will help to identify smuggled or illicit shipments of nuclear and radiological materials.

"This joint collaboration with Belgium at one of Europe's largest seaports will not only enhance security in Belgium, but also help to secure the entire global shipping network. The Megaports program is crucial to preventing terrorists from using shipping channels to smuggle illicit nuclear and radiological material," said NNSA Administrator Linton F. Brooks.

Since 2004, NNSA has been cooperating and working closely with Belgium's Ministry of Finance to install the equipment and train operators. The Megaports design and installation, which covers 10 container terminals across 13,348 hectares (approximately 33,000 acres), will allow the monitors to screen a significant amount of container traffic that transits the port.

NNSA's Megaports Initiative is aimed at preventing smuggled shipments of nuclear and radioactive materials through the global shipping network. It enhances capabilities at international ports to detect, deter and interdict illicit materials. NNSA works with international partners to install specialized radiation detection equipment and provide training to appropriate law enforcement officials.

The specialized radiation detection technology deployed under the program is based on technology originally developed by NNSA's national laboratories as part of the U.S. government's overall efforts to guard against the proliferation of weapons materials. The Megaports program is currently operational in six countries, and is at various stages of implementation and negotiations with approximately 30 other countries around the world.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad. Visit www.nnsa.doe.gov for more information.

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